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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/751,165	01/03/2004	Simon Anthony Nield	P446	1595

7590 05/04/2006

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EXAMINER

LOWE, MICHAEL S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3652

DATE MAILED: 05/04/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/751,165

Applicant(s)

NIELD, SIMON ANTHONY

Examiner

M. Scott Lowe

Art Unit

3652

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 June 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the manual operator and "U" section channel must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

On page 6, item "39" is referred to as a "mouth" in line 3 and a "shutter" in lines 16, 18, 25, and 26. It appears that item "49" is the "shutter".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informalities: there is no punctuation at the end of the claim. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 3 is objected to because of the following informalities: "rails comprise "U" section channel" should be "each rail comprises a "U" cross-section channel" or something similar for clarity. Appropriate correction is required.

Claims 5,12,14 are objected to because of the following informalities: there is no space between "Claim" and the claim number. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-5,8,9,10,11,12,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Re claims 1,4,5,9,10,12, it is unclear what "its" refers to. The actual limitation being referred to should be used.

Re claim 1, line 5 states "translational movement" although the drawings make it clear that there is no translational movement since there is rotation. For sake of examination it is assumed applicant meant "horizontally displaced".

Re claim 1, line 6, it is unclear what is meant by "in use". It is assumed to not mean any particular structural limitation.

Re claim 2, line 2, applicant states "one on each side of the bin". The specification and drawings only disclose the rails on a pair of opposite sides and not all four sides. For sake of examination it is assumed applicant meant "the rails on a pair of opposite sides".

Re claim 2,4,12, applicant states each rail has one end "adjacent the floor". This is unclear since the drawings show the rails near the floor but not truly adjacent the floor. For sake of examination it is assumed applicant meant "near the floor" or "substantially adjacent to the floor".

Re claim 3, it is assumed applicant meant "the rails each comprise a "U" section channel" for sake of clarity.

Re claims 4,12,14, applicant states "a conveyor" even though there is already "a conveyor" in claim 1. For sake of examination it is assumed applicant meant "the conveyor".

Re claim 8, applicant states there is an actuator on "each side of the bin" but this is not supported by the drawings and specification. For sake of examination it is assumed applicant meant "each of two opposing sides of the bin".

Re claim 9, for sake of clarity it is assumed applicant meant "cross-section" rather than "section".

Re claim 11, applicant states that "the shutter opens" which does not appear correct. It appears and for sake of examination it is assumed that applicant meant that "the shutter is stationary and a laundry discharge gap opens between the shutter and the leading side of the bin."

Re claim 14, applicant stated "at least one collection bin". It is unclear if this is the same "bin" claimed in claim 1.

Re claim 14, it is unclear in line 3 which "bin" is being referred to.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1,7,8,10,11,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gunn (US 4,802,810).

Re claim 1, Gunn teaches a collection bin assembly 12 usable for a commercial laundry and which comprises a frame 14,22 resting on a floor and a bin 2 supported in the frame with its mouth oriented to receive items of laundry, the frame further including a track (various,28,68,etc.) which has an upward inclination relative to the floor with the bin 2 being displaceable along the track for both upwards movement away from said

floor and translational movement relative to the floor to move the bin from a lowered position to a raised discharge position in use sufficiently clear of the floor to permit discharge of any contents 8 in the bin onto a conveyor 98.

Re claim 7, Gunn teaches the bin 2 moved along the track by at least one actuator 70,34 operable between the frame and the bin.

Re claim 8, Gunn teaches there are two actuators 70,34 arranged one on each side (the relative left and right sides) of the bin 2.

Re claim 10, Gunn teaches the bin 2 has its bottom 4 (relative term) closed when in the lowered position and said bottom gradually opens as the bin is moved to its raised discharge position.

Re claim 11, Gunn teaches the bottom 4 of the bin 2 formed by a shutter 28 secured to the frame so that the shutter opens as the bin 2 moves towards the discharge position.

Re claim 14, Gunn teaches a commercial laundry system including a conveyor with at least one collection bin assembly according to Claim 1, arranged to one side of the conveyor, the discharge position for said bin being located above the conveyor.

Claims 1-3,5-8,10,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fesmire (US 6,116,849).

Re claim 1, Fesmire teaches a collection bin assembly usable for a commercial laundry and which comprises a frame (43,74,68,etc.) resting on a floor and a bin 40 supported in the frame with its mouth oriented to receive items of laundry, the frame

further including a track (various, 74, 72, etc.) which has an upward inclination relative to the floor with the bin 40 being displaceable along the track for both upwards movement away from said floor and translational movement relative to the floor to move the bin from a lowered position to a raised discharge position in use sufficiently clear of the floor to permit discharge of any contents in the bin onto a conveyor 34.

Re claim 2, Fesmire teaches the track comprises a pair of spaced apart substantially parallel rails 74 arranged one on each side of the bin 40 with one end adjacent the floor and the other end cantilevered outwards from the frame to provide the raised discharge position.

Re claim 3, Fesmire teaches the rails comprise "U" section channel 74 with the mouths of the two channels arranged in opposition, and bearing means 76 mounted on the bin are engageable within the opposed channels.

Re claim 5, Fesmire teaches the bin is held in the frame in a tilted condition with its mouth presentable towards a manual operator, and the angle of inclination of the bin to the ground increases (figures 5A-5C) as the bin moves along the track towards its raised discharge position.

Re claim 6, Fesmire teaches (figures 5A-5C) the bin is inclined at about 45 degrees in the lowered position and at least 60 degrees in the raised discharge position.

Re claim 7, Fesmire teaches the bin 40 moved along the track by at least one actuator 70, 92 operable between the frame and the bin.

Re claim 8, Fesmire teaches there are two actuators 70, 92, 92 arranged one on each side (the relative left and right sides) of the bin 40.

Re claim 10, Fesmire teaches the bin 40 has its bottom (relative term) closed when in the lowered position and said bottom gradually (relative term) becomes open as the bin is moved to its raised discharge position (figure 5c).

Re claim 14, Fesmire teaches a commercial laundry system including a conveyor with at least one collection bin assembly according to claim 1, arranged to one side of the conveyor, the discharge position for said bin being located above the conveyor.

Claims 1,2,4-8,10-12,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tomoika (JP 354111994A).

Re claim 1, Tomoika teaches a collection bin assembly usable for a commercial laundry and which comprises a frame (not numbered) resting on a floor and a bin 15 supported in the frame with its mouth oriented to receive items of laundry, the frame further including a track (various, 1,5,21, etc.) which has an upward inclination relative to the floor with the bin 15 being displaceable along the track for both upwards movement away from said floor and translational movement relative to the floor to move the bin from a lowered position to a raised discharge position in use sufficiently clear of the floor to permit discharge of any contents in the bin onto a conveyor 25.

Re claim 2, Tomoika teaches the track comprises a pair of spaced apart substantially parallel rails 1,5,21 arranged one on each side of the bin 15 with one end adjacent the floor and the other end cantilevered outwards from the frame to provide the raised discharge position.

Re claim 4, Tomoika teaches the track (various, 1, 5, 21, etc.) being arcuate having one end adjacent the floor with said track extending away therefrom so that its raised end in use is located above a conveyor 25.

Re claim 5, Tomoika teaches the bin 15 is held in the frame in a tilted condition with its mouth presentable towards a manual operator, and the angle of inclination of the bin to the ground increases as the bin moves along the track towards its raised discharge position.

Re claim 6, Tomoika teaches the bin 15 is inclined at about 45 degrees in the lowered position and at least 60 degrees in the raised discharge position.

Re claim 7, Tomoika teaches the bin 15 moved along the track by at least one actuator 11, 13, 25 operable between the frame and the bin.

Re claim 8, Tomoika teaches there are two actuators 11, 13, 25 arranged one on each side (the relative left and right or top and bottom sides) of the bin 15.

Re claim 10, Tomoika teaches the bin 15 has its bottom (relative term) closed when in the lowered position and said bottom gradually opens as the bin is moved to its raised discharge position.

Re claim 11, Tomoika teaches the bottom of the bin 15 formed by a shutter 1, 5, 21 secured to the frame so that the shutter opens as the bin 15 moves towards the discharge position.

Re claim 12, Tomoika teaches said track (various, 1, 5, 21, etc.) being arcuate with one end adjacent the floor with said track extending away therefrom so that its raised

end in use is located above a conveyor 25, and the shutter (1,5,21) being arcuate and arranged concentrically with the arcuate track.

Re claim 14, Tomoika teaches a system including a conveyor with at least one collection bin assembly according to claim 1, arranged to one side of the conveyor, the discharge position for said bin being located above the conveyor.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunn (US 4,802,810).

Re claim 9, Gunn teaches the bin is substantially square in section and when in a lowered (relative term) position (figure 3) is tilted at about 45 degrees to the vertical with the forward edge of its mouth being a maximum height above the floor with its forward bottom edge being proximate (relative term) the floor. Gunn does not give dimensions, however it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Gunn to have the maximum height be of 1100 mm or any other height to meet the space and storage requirements.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fesmire (US 6,116,849).

Re claim 9, Fesmire teaches the bin is substantially square in section (there is at least one section of 40 that is square) and when in a lowered (relative term) position (figure 5A) is tilted at about 45 degrees to the vertical with the forward edge of its mouth being a maximum height above the floor with its forward bottom edge being proximate (relative term) the floor. Fesmire does not give dimensions, however it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Fesmire to have the maximum height be of 1100 mm or any other height to meet the space and storage requirements.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomoika (JP 354111994A).

Re claim 9, Tomoika teaches the bin is substantially square in section and when in a lowered (relative term) position is tilted at about 45 degrees to the vertical with the forward edge of its mouth being a maximum height above the floor with its forward bottom edge being proximate (relative term) the floor. Tomoika does not give dimensions, however it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Tomoika to have the maximum height be of 1100 mm or any other height to meet the space and storage requirements.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunn (US 4,802,810) in view of Shalev (US 5,764,522).

Re claim 13, Gunn teaches the frame 14,22 comprises two parts, a base part 14,22 standing on the floor, and an upper part (24,22,etc.) on which the track (various,28,68,etc.) and bin 2 are mounted, with the upper part resting on the base part. Gunn is silent on load sensors. Shalev teaches a load sensor 18 acting between two parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Gunn by Shalev to have a load sensor 18 acting between two parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity in order to save work for the operator.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fesmire (US 6,116,849) in view of Shalev (US 5,764,522).

Re claim 13, Fesmire teaches the frame (43,74,68,etc.) comprises two parts, a base part 43 (etc.) standing on the floor, and an upper part (68,74,etc.) on which the track (various,74,72,etc.) and bin 40 are mounted, with the upper part resting on the base part. Fesmire is silent on load sensors. Shalev teaches a load sensor 18 acting between two parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Fesmire by Shalev to have a load sensor 18 acting between two

parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity in order to save work for the operator.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomoika (JP 354111994A) in view of Shalev (US 5,764,522).

Re claim 13, Tomoika teaches the frame (1,3,21,etc.) comprises two parts, a base part (inherent, it cannot float in space) standing on the floor, and an upper part (1,3,21,etc.) on which the track (various,1,5,21,etc.) and bin 15 are mounted, with the upper part resting on the base part. Tomoika is silent on load sensors. Shalev teaches a load sensor 18 acting between two parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Tomoika by Shalev to have a load sensor 18 acting between two parts to indicate to an operator when the bin is nominally full to capacity in order to save work for the operator.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Matsumoto (JP54111986A)

Rooke (US 3,651,967)

Rooke (US 3,717,270)

Butzow (US 3,863,781)

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Scott Lowe whose telephone number is (571) 272-6929. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am-4:30pm M-Th.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen Lillis can be reached on (571) 272-6928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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